

**Using the *Stages*  
Framework as a Strategy  
for Designing Curriculum  
and Alternative  
Assessment for Learners  
with Cognitive and  
Language Challenges**

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**Learning Objectives**

**Through this VIP session you will:**

- Understand the basics about the Stages Alternate Assessment Process and background research.
- Identify assessment activities that correlate to State Performance Standards.
- Learn how to chart sample learner data & create reports through Stages Report Wizard.

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***Ways to Include Learners with  
Special Needs in Assessments***

- 1) participate in the general education assessment methods;**
- 2) use accommodations or modifications to the general education assessment methods;**
- 3) participate in performance-based or portfolio alternative assessment.**

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### ***Eligibility for Alternative Assessment***

**A student with a disability who....**

- requires substantial modifications to instructional level and learning standards in a content area, and
- requires intensive, individualized instruction in order to acquire and generalize knowledge, and
- is unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a paper and pencil test, even with accommodations,

**. . should participate in local alternate  
assessment in that specific subject area.**

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### ***IEP Teams can consider other students for alternative assessment***

A student with a disability may require  
alternate assessment if . . .

- The complexity or severity of the disability presents unique and significant challenges to demonstrating knowledge and skills on standard tests, or
- the regular test format does not allow student to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills,

. . . and these challenges cannot be  
overcome using accommodations.

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Nearly each state alternate assessment assess the same standards as general assessments either by expanding state standards, linking a set of functional skills back to standards, or assessing standards plus an additional set of functional skills.

Georgia, Mississippi, Nebraska, and Ohio assess functional skills only, with no link to state standards. Iowa links the alternate assessment to local standards. Texas and Wisconsin allow IEP teams to determine what individualized alternate assessments will assess.

Thompson, Sandra; and Thurlow, Martha L. 2001. State Special Education Outcomes: A Report on State Activities at the Beginning of a New Decade. Published by the National Center on Educational Outcomes, June 2001.

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The alignment of alternate assessments with standards has evolved since 1999. Several states that in 1999 indicated they were developing alternate assessments based on a special education curriculum no longer give that response. Instead, they have moved to responses indicating some connection between the alternate assessment and state standards.

Year	State Standards (May be Expanded)	Functional Skills Linked Back to State Standards	State Standards Plus Functional Skills	Functional Skills Only, No Link to State Standards
1999*	19 (88%)	---	1 (2%)	16 (82%)
2000**	26 (65%)	3 (6%)	7 (14%)	9 (18%)

Thompson, Sandra; and Thurlow, Martha L. 2001 State Special Education Outcomes: A Report on State Activities at the Beginning of a New Decade. Published by the National Center on Educational Outcomes, June 2001.

## Another model for how all students access the general curriculum

- Standards as written
- Entry points
- Access skills

Other terminology?

## Entry Points

- Based on the general curriculum  
(i.e., learning standards)
- Faithful to essence of standard
- Low-med-high levels of difficulty  
and complexity
- Appropriately challenging for each  
student

### *Access Skills*

When even the lowest Entry Point  
seems too challenging...

- Student can practice targeted access  
skills within standards-based instruction
- Instruction can still focus on standards

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### **Model Levels of Participation- General Curriculum**

**Introductory:** Skills that require **basic processing** of information to address real-world situations that are related to the content standards, regardless of the age or grade level of the student.

**Fundamental:** Skills that require **simple decision-making** to address real-world situations that are related to the content standards, regardless of the age or grade level of the student.

**Comprehensive:** Skills that require **higher-order thinking** and complex information-processing skills that are related to the content standards, regardless of the age or grade level of the student.

Louisiana State Board of Education; Alternate Assessment Teacher's Guide to Statewide Alternate Assessment, Spring 2003.

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### **North Carolina Standard Course of Study Language Arts**

**Competency Goal 1** The learner will develop and apply enabling strategies and skills to read and write.

**Essence:** The learner will develop strategies for communication

#### **Presymbolic Skills**

- \* Activate a switch to start a book on tape
- \* Finger scan a textured object that represents the next activity.

#### **Early Symbolic**

- \* Name community building pictures
- \* Point to self when first letter of own name is placed in hand
- \* Identify restroom symbol
- \* Identify own workbook through tactile scanning

#### **Symbolic**

- \* Identify weather related words
- \* Read sight words embedded in a story

•<http://www.uncc.edu/aap/>

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**Example: MA Curriculum Frameworks  
Learning Standards and Essence**

**CONTENT STRAND** English Language Arts  
Language  
**General Standard 3: Oral Presentation**  
*Students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed.*

**English Language Arts  
Strand 1  
Language  
General  
Standard 3  
PreK - 2  
3 - 4**

**Grade Level: PreK - 2; 3 - 4**

Learning Standards as written		Essence of the Standard(s)
PreK - 2	3.1 Give oral presentations about personal experiences or interests, using clear enunciation and adequate volume.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give oral presentations based on personal interests</li> <li>Stay on topic</li> </ul>
	3.2 Maintain focus on the topic.	

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**How all students can participate**

**standards as written**

**entry points**

**access skills**

**Addressing Learning Standard(s) as written for this grade level**  
Rosa gives a presentation on the museum visit using American Sign Language, as do her classmates.

**Addressing Learning Standard(s) at lower level of complexity ("Entry Points")**  
Jeffrey shares two or three photographs of favorite exhibits with a smaller group of students.

**Addressing Access Skill(s) (skills embedded in academic instruction)**  
Amber reaches for, grasps, and activates an electronic switch that advances slides of a museum trip when prompted by a peer.

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**Primary Evidence**

- Student Work
- Instructional Data
- Videotapes
- Photographs (only in special cases)
- *Something to discuss?*

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## Stages Report for 1 Occurrence

Stage Five: Reading for Meaning - Words			
Learner's Name:	Randy	Prompt Type:	Multisensory
Input Method:	Mouse and Keyboard	Word Set:	Grade 2
	Tries	Correct?	Finish?
read	1	YES	YES
sing	2	YES	
sleep	2	YES	Time (minutes:seconds)
write	1	YES	1:24
wash	1	YES	

1/5/02

3:42 PM

Print

Score

Delete

## Secondary Evidence

Secondary Evidence provides description, clarification or explanation, and context to support Primary Evidence:

- Photographs
- Narratives
- Audiotape
- Reflection sheets
- Letters of support
- Visual aids, organizers, other tools used by student

## Stages Observation Forms as Secondary Evidence

Observation Form—Stage Five

Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Observer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Setting for Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Reading/Listening/Spelling

Did the learner demonstrate the appropriate reading skills as required? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

How did the learner know how to spell the word correctly? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Did the learner use the correct strategy? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Did the learner use the correct strategy? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Did the learner demonstrate the correct use of the strategy to support the task? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Did the learner demonstrate the correct use of the strategy to support the task? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Reading/Listening/Spelling

Did the learner read/write the word? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Check these pages for more of the same observations.

### *Scoring Criteria (Rubric): Level of Complexity*

#### Difficulty and Complexity of Material

1	2	3	4	5
Not based on standards; OR not indicated	Access skills practiced within standards-based instruction	Modified learning standards (entry points)	Small number of learning standards as written (at or near grade-level)	Broad range of learning standards as written (at or near grade-level)

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### Stages Framework Process




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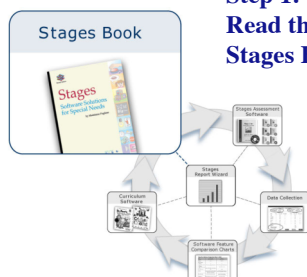
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### Step 1: Read the Stages Book




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## Book Components

### Overview of Stages

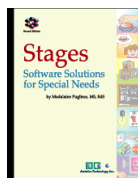
- What is Stages?
- Research (Piaget + Chomsky) = New Theory

### About the Learners

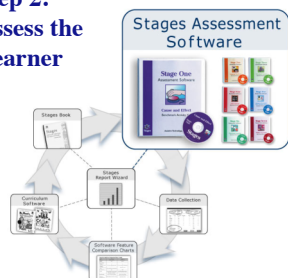
- Observable Characteristics
- Competency Goals
- Sample IEP Objectives
- Off computer activity ideas
- Communication ideas

### About the Software

- Software Selection Tips
- Recommended Programs



## Step 2: Assess the Learner



## Assessment Kits

### Each Kit includes:

- accessible computer activities to assess a learner's skills
- script for evaluator to follow
- unique Observation Form
- a guide to selecting appropriate software







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- | Sample Stages Reports - Stages One  |                  |                       |      |              |       |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|------------------|-----------------------|------|--------------|-------|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Stage One - Press and Hold Report   |                  |                       |      |              |       |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|    | Report Name      | Date Range            |      | Product Type |       | Workflow |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | Super Referral   | 1/1/2012 - 12/31/2012 |      | All          |       | All      |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | Report Type      | Report Period         |      | Product Type |       | Workflow |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | Required Product | Product               |      | Product Type |       | Workflow |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ranking   |                  | 21                    | 0.02 | 0            | 0.06  | 766      |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |                  |                       |      |              |       |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| View All: 01/01/2012 - 12/31/2012   |                  | Ranking Report        |      | Print        | Close | Refresh  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Stage One - Press and Release Report  |                  |                       |      |              |       |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Report Name      | Date Range            |      | Product Type |       | Workflow |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | Super Referral   | 1/1/2012 - 12/31/2012 |      | All          |       | All      |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | Report Type      | Report Period         |      | Product Type |       | Workflow |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   | Required Product | Product               |      | Product Type |       | Workflow |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ranking   |                  | 1                     | 14   | 4            | 0.03  | 766      |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |                  |                       |      |              |       |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| View All: 01/01/2012 - 12/31/2012   |                  | Ranking Report        |      | Print        | Close | Refresh  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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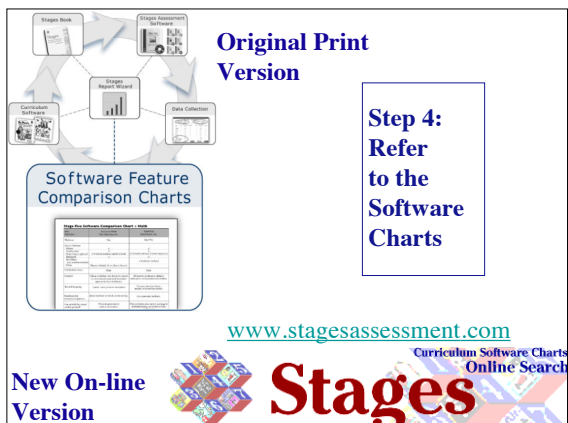
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- [illegible]



**Original Print Version**

**Step 4: Refer to the Software Charts**

[www.stagesassessment.com](http://www.stagesassessment.com)

**New On-line Version**

**Stages**

Curriculum Software Charts Online Search

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### Select Practice Software

- Select appropriate software
- Use software you already own
- Keep up-to-date on new titles
- Implement "smart spending"



**Stages**

Curriculum Software Charts Online Search

New Online Version at  
<http://www.stagesassessment.com>

Software Title	Language Arts	Math	Science	History	Art	Music	Physical Education	Health	Other
Abacus									
Abacus 2									
Abacus 3									
Abacus 4									
Abacus 5									
Abacus 6									
Abacus 7									
Abacus 8									
Abacus 9									
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### Select Practice Software

**Stage Five**  
Curriculum Software Search

• How to use this form  
• Return to Stages Main Search Home  
• Glossary of Terms

**Search by Feature**

**Publisher:** (scroll down and select)  
☐ All Publishers  
☐ Assessment Company  
☐ Curriculum Communications  
☐ CIMA

**Platform:**  
☒ Any Platform  
☐ Mac  
☐ Windows  
☐ DOS

**Graphics:**  
☒ No preference  
☐ Child  
☐ Teen/Adult  
☐ Generic

**Access Options:**  
☒ No preference  
☐ Keyboard  
☐ Mouse  
☐ Touchscreen  
☐ Stylus

**Feedback Type:**  
☒ No preference  
☐ Auditory Feedback  
☐ Visual Feedback  
☐ Multisensory Feedback

**Content:**  
☒ No preference  
☐ Language Arts  
☐ Math  
☐ Problem Solving  
☐ Reading  
☐ Spelling  
☐ Science  
☐ Social Studies

**Software MUST have Record Keeping?**  
☐ Yes ☒ No

**Software MUST also be appropriate for another Stage?**  
☐ Yes ☒ No

Start by:

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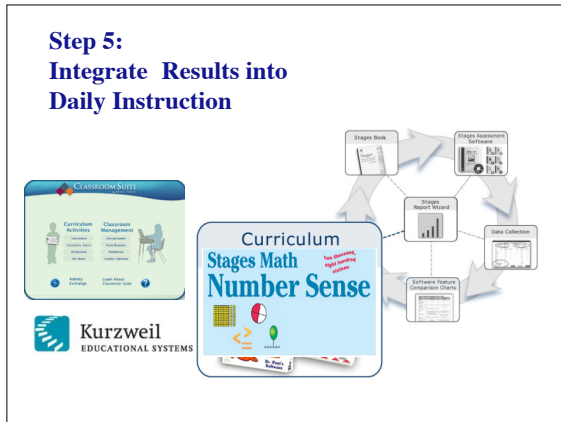
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**Curriculum Bundles**

**Each bundle includes:**

- computer programs for building skills (“Practice, Practice, Practice!”)
- popular programs in special education and language development
- software developed by therapists and educators in the field

This section is crossed out with a large red 'X'. It describes 'Curriculum Bundles' which include various computer programs for building skills, popular programs in special education and language development, and software developed by therapists and educators. The image shows a stack of software boxes, one of which is titled 'the dog is walking'.

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**New! Stages Report Wizard**

**Quickly & Easily Compile Data:**

- Automatically locates your saved Stages data
- Generates graphs & content mastery tables
- Allows customization such as adding learner profiles, observations, recommendations, and IEP goals
- Compiles results into a final report which can be printed or saved



Stage Four: Assess Counting  
% Correct on First Try

Content	First	Final	Average
100	0%	100%	75%
101	0%	100%	75%
102	0%	100%	75%
103	0%	100%	75%
104	0%	100%	75%
105	0%	100%	75%
106	0%	100%	75%
107	0%	100%	75%
108	0%	100%	75%
109	0%	100%	75%
110	0%	100%	75%
111	0%	100%	75%
112	0%	100%	75%
113	0%	100%	75%
114	0%	100%	75%
115	0%	100%	75%
116	0%	100%	75%
117	0%	100%	75%
118	0%	100%	75%
119	0%	100%	75%
120	0%	100%	75%

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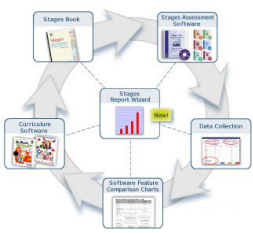
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**The Stages Alternate Assessment Process**



Gives you a way to:

- assess students skills and abilities.
- form IEP goals and objectives.
- select appropriate software for skill development.
- track learner progress over time.

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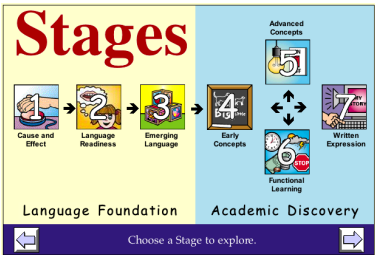
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**Let's look at the content...**



**Stages**

Language Foundation Academic Discovery

Choose a Stage to explore.

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**Stages Report Wizard is a software tool that processes saved Stages Assessment report data to:**

- 1) plot graphs;**
- 2) analyze content; and**
- 3) create custom summary reports focused on specific behaviors or skills.**

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**Stages Report Wizard generates bar charts and line graphs showing:**

**Accuracy:** How often did the learner get the answer correct on the first try?

**Number of tries:** Is the learner completing the activity with fewer tries?

**Time on activity:** Has the time increased or decreased for this learner?

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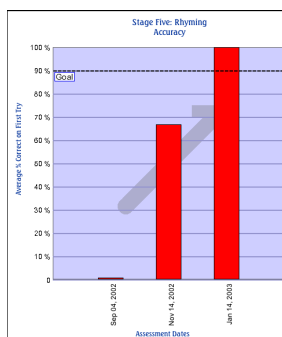
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## Accuracy



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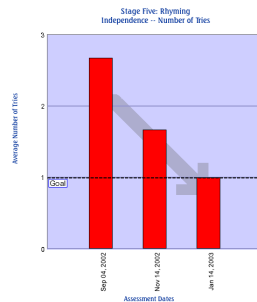
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### Number of Tries




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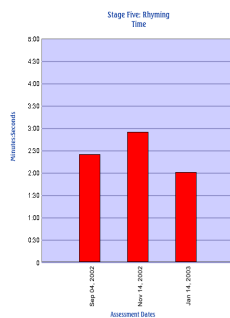
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### Time on Activity




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### Content Mastery

Stages Report Wizard shows specific content the learner understands and which areas need more work.

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### Content Mastery Report

3 Sessions 7

**Content Mastery Table**  
Stage Five: Rhyming

Date Range: Sep 14, 2011 - Nov 14, 2011

% Correct on First Try for First, Final, and Average of All Sessions

Content	First	Final	Average
cat / fat	0%	100%	67%
bug / rug	0%	100%	67%
water / water	0%	100%	67%
boat / goat	0%	100%	67%
heel / heel	0%	100%	22%
ski / right	0%	100%	22%

**Comments:** Michael has mastered this skill and works with complete independence.

[Return to Graphs](#) [Go to Summary](#)

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**Stages Report Wizard  
generates two types of  
reports:**

**an Annotated Report and  
an Activity Summary**

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Let's see the Stages Report Wizard in action!  
First we collect data...

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***References***

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***Thanks for attending!***

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